UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1994/460
18 April 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 18 APRIL 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In accordance with instructions from my Government, I have the honour to address you in respect of the dangerous situation in Gorazde in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Republic of Croatia is seriously alarmed by the developments in Gorazde, where yet another Serbian act of carnage remains unchallenged. Gorazde is becoming a new symbol of moral and humanitarian catastrophe, which is seriously undermining the credibility of the Security Council.

The unparalleled and blatant lack of respect for Security Council resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993) is a dangerous precedent which could unravel the peace process not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina but also in Croatia. The future ability of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to carry out even its minimal duties has now come into question. My Government has always advocated a stronger UNPROFOR mandate in cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but even the present mandate has been turned into a mockery by the Serbs. There was no appropriate response by the international community when a NATO plane was engaged nor when peace-keepers were killed in Gorazde and in Sarajevo recently.

The situation in Gorazde has already had a very negative effect on the peace talks my Government has pursued with the Serbian insurgents: the rebel Serb authorities have refused to resume the second round of talks as scheduled for last week; there are increasing reports of provoking actions by the Serbian paramilitary units, especially in United Nations Protected Area (UNPA) sectors West and South; and, a report from UNPA sector East, that rebel Serbs in Baranja have reclaimed weapons in violation of the cease-fire agreement of 29 March.

The deteriorating situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina could also make the prospects for timely implementation of the Federation Agreement between the Bosnian Muslims and Croats more difficult. The tens of thousands of displaced persons from Gorazde pouring into central Bosnia would be a serious threat to the balance achieved in the area. The area simply does not have the resources to accommodate such pressures. My Government will, nevertheless, pursue all necessary steps to ensure that the aforesaid Agreement is not threatened.

Displaced persons in Bosnia usually become refugees in Croatia, and my Government must remind the Council that Croatia already cares for 280,000 Bosnian refugees, at a direct financial cost of US$ 832 million through year-end 1993. My Government has been able to make this contribution with negligible direct financial assistance, and while its access to capital markets has been delayed. Croatia cannot sit by idly while it is being asked to bear the brunt of the costs for the international community's humanitarian policy in Bosnia.

The situation in Gorazde is a repeat of the tragedy of Vukovar, where the world simply watched as innocent people became victims of a pariah regime, while those same victims were being held down by the international community. Now, even more tragically, if there were an evacuation of residents and refugees from Gorazde, UNPROFOR and other humanitarian organizations would indirectly become accessories to the deplorable Serbian policy of ethnic cleansing.

The Council must not allow another Vukovar to happen two and one half years later. Serbian aggression must finally be stopped. Even the discussions about the possible lifting of sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) are counterproductive under these circumstances.

The international community must act decisively within the options available at this time: Security Council resolutions must be enforced without temporary political qualifications; or the UNPROFOR mandate should be redefined; or the international community should consider how the proposed confederation between the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia can be utilized to achieve the desired balance of power in the region.

The international community's policy of partial humanitarian assistance to the region has outlived its effectiveness, and a new policy course must be considered. The Council must now be ready to dictate peace. The lack of resolute action within the framework of options available to the Council at this time would seriously jeopardize not only the prospect for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also the territorial integrity and security of the Republic of Croatia. My Government, while it remains committed to the peace process, reserves its right to reconsider its position with respect to the situation in its occupied territories under these dangerous and deteriorating circumstances, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

May I request your assistance in circulating this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative